

sufferings, contending against those vices,  
and assuaging  
those sorrows. . . . Thus, what might have  
been, only an  
admirable literary achievement, an  
inestimable document  
on a period, an ever-living picture of a given  
time . . .  
acquires greater grandeur, is insured of yet  
loftier glory,  
by the generous spirit which inspired it."<sup>1</sup>

Further, though it has been suggested here  
that some ex-  
aggeration and some flaws may appear in the  
psychology of  
certain individual characters, the series as a  
whole responds to  
Taine's definition of literature as " a living  
psychology." As  
M. Paul Bourget has said: " Zola regarded the  
novel as a  
kind of hypothetical experiment, attempted  
on positive  
bases, the first condition for success being  
that the bases  
should be accurate and the hypothesis logical.  
"When the  
hour of justice strikes for that unwearying  
toiler people  
will recognise what immense preliminary toil  
and study lay  
beneath each of his books. They will also  
discern his un-  
wavering purpose to inquire fully into the  
condition of  
contemporary France, to carry his inquiry as  
far as possible  
in order to set the social problem completely  
and accu-  
rately before one. His right to depict all reality  
(te *rtalite*  
*totale*), which is that of every sociologist, even  
of every his-  
torian, will not be disputed then."

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader  
that the  
Eougon-Macquax novels should be studied,  
whenever pos-

sible, in the original Trench, and not in translations. There have been many versions of the books in the English language ; the present writer has made himself responsible for not a few of them; and certainly translations are in a measure useful, for as yet a knowledge of foreign languages is